

Reminiscences 1

Although I did not know Cal Elgot early in his mathematical career, I did know of him through some of his early work on logical nets, since my early interests in theoretical computer science were centered around switching circuit theory. I met Cal first when he joined IBM Research in 1959, but it was only a number of years later when we both became members of the Mathematical Sciences Department that we really got to know each other.

In my view Cal's most outstanding feature was his deep interest in and insistence on mathematical precision in his computer science research. He interacted closely with others in the Department having computer science interests, and would probe their ideas in search of a more precise and concise distillation of the basic concepts being considered. This flavor also is clearly seen in his papers. Cal also played an important role in the nurturing of computer science research in the Mathematical Sciences Department. He hired some of the people, and managed a group for many years.

With Cal's untimely death on July 8, 1980 a void, never possible to fill, occurred both at the IBM Research Center, where he spent so much of his professional career, as well as in the computer science research community. His influence, however, will last both through his many research contributions and through his direct influence on many others.

R. E. MILLER